



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

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Celebrate National Agriculture Week **Governor Minner proclaims March 20 – 26 as Ag Week in Delaware**

March 20 – 26, 2005 is National Agriculture Week; and March 20, 2005 is National Agriculture Day. Governor Minner has proclaimed March 20 – 26, **Ag Week in Delaware**. (See attached.) Celebrate the week and the day by reflecting on the role agriculture plays in your life. So much that is part of our daily lives is connected to what happens on our farms and ranches. We all have to eat and to wear clothes. We all need shelter, and fuel. Together, we can thank all of the men and women who are part of agriculture for providing us with these necessities.

Today, on the average, one American farmer produces enough food annually to feed 144 people -- providing us with an abundant supply of safe, high-quality food. In fact, the United States has the most economical food supply in the world. Delaware agriculture employs thousands of state residents; and production agriculture, along with the equine sector, adds \$1 billion to the Delaware's economy each year.

Agriculture in Delaware is more than food, fiber, shelter, and fuel; it is an integral part of Governor Minner's Livable Delaware strategy. "Livable Delaware" means a healthy environment-clean water, clean air, open space, etc. More than 80 percent of all of Delaware's remaining privately-owned open space is owned by farmers. Preserving this farmland not only sustains our agricultural economy, it preserves Delaware's physical landscape and open space, with all of its visual and aesthetic qualities. Preserving agricultural land preserves the character of our community, our history, and way of life for future generations. It enables Delaware to better conserve its natural resources, such as water and wildlife habitat. Across the nation, farmland is home to 75% of the nation's wildlife.

Those of us who do not farm for a living enjoy the beautiful vistas provided by the open space that is farmland. In Delaware the quality of our habitat, air and water ultimately depends on preserving much of the land now in farming.

Secretary of Agriculture Michael Scuse says, "We grow some of the highest quality, most desirable food products in the world, right here in Delaware. Today, however, our farmers are competing with food products from all around the world. One excellent way to show our support for Delaware agriculture is to "Be Loyal and Buy Local." Look for Delaware products in your supermarkets. If you don't see them, ask the grocers to stock them and to label them. Ask if the food is locally purchased when you dine in a restaurant. Shop your local farmers' market for the freshest of the fresh local produce."

"It's not just about food," Scuse continued. "If you own diesel vehicles and equipment, think about using biodiesel for fuel. Soy biodiesel not only helps farmers' profitability and sustainability, it helps us ease our dependence on foreign oil and helps us improve our air quality."

Two generations ago, more than 30 million Americans lived on farms and ranches. Today only 4.6 million Americans share that heritage. We all too often take for granted farmers', and ranchers', contributions to our quality of life. Everyday in every way, we all depend on agriculture. Thank a farmer today!

STATE OF DELAWARE



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATEMENT IN OBSERVANCE OF AGRICULTURE WEEK

Whereas, agriculture is a reflection of our past and the bridge to our future; and

Whereas, the history of Delaware has been molded by farmers and ranchers, oftentimes perpetuated by families for several generations and included farm workers who have supported and contributed to the proud tradition of agriculture; and

Whereas, the State of Delaware recognizes the contributions of these honorable men and women involved with agriculture; and

Whereas, these people are known as conscientious stewards of our natural resources as they continue to seek new methods of maintaining harmony with the environment; and

Whereas, agriculture in the First State and across the nation, feeds, clothes, and fuels the world and it is vitally important that we recognize how these commodities are produced; and

Whereas, we value and appreciate the role agriculture plays here in the First State in the provisions of safe, abundant and affordable products; and

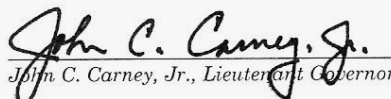
Whereas, agriculture is the mainstay of Delaware's economy and quality of life and is a leading source of jobs for the First State.

**Now, Therefore, We, Ruth Ann Minner, Governor,
and John C. Carney, Jr., Lieutenant Governor,
do hereby declare March 20 - 26, 2005**

AGRICULTURE WEEK

in the State of Delaware, and urge all Delawareans to celebrate our modern agricultural industry, reflect on the importance and strength of agriculture in our society and thank the hard working men and women of Delaware agriculture.


Ruth Ann Minner, Governor


John C. Carney, Jr., Lieutenant Governor

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